

Mid Kent Revenues and Benefits Swale Borough Council Equality Impact Assessment

Part 1: Background and information

Title of Proposal (strategy, policy, plan, project, contract, service change)
Housing Benefits War Pensions Policy
Brief description of proposal (objective & purpose)
War Pensions are currently 100% disregarded as part of the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Schemes. The policy is being reviewed as part of the annual Housing Benefit subsidy process.
Is this Proposal new/a review of an existing provision/a change/deletion of existing provision
This is a review of an existing provision.
Who will be affected by this proposal? (Residents, Staff, Visitors, Businesses?)
Veterans of the armed forces and war widows/widowers.
Weblink to full details (if applicable)
Lead Director/HoS/Manager
Zoe Kent – Head of Revenues and Benefits
EqIA lead officer
Zoe Kent – Head of Revenues and Benefits
EqIA contributors (other services involved in proposal)
Zoe Kent – Head of Revenues and Benefits
Date of EqIA
23 December 2024

The Equality Act (2010) places a general duty on all public sector organisations to have 'due regard' to its three main aims.

How does the proposal meet the general duty of the act's aims as listed below? (Please see the guidance document for further detail on what is meant by 'due regard' and types of discrimination).

General duty	Please Explain
Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010	This is a local policy fulfilling a legislative requirement of Government. The policy is designed to support veterans of the armed forces and war widows/widowers.
Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.	The Policy supports veterans of the armed forces and war widows/widowers.
Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Armed Forces Champions work with veterans of the armed forces on behalf of the council.

Part 2: Impact Assessment and Supporting evidence

Identify the positive and / or negative impact of the proposal change on any of the protected characteristics. Please consider the impact as an employer (staff), a service provider and a community leader (residents, businesses etc).

Protected characteristic	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact
Age	/		
Disability	/		
Race (including ethnicity and nationality)	/		
Religion or Belief	/		
Sex	/		
Sexual Orientation	/		
Gender Reassignment	/		
Pregnancy and Maternity	/		
Marriage or Civil Partnership			/

Please also consider the impact of the proposal in relation to:

Local characteristic	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact
Poverty (in relation to groups with protected characteristics and those without)	/		
Armed Forces Community (Serving/Veterans)	/		

Summary of Impact and Supporting Evidence

Please list below any data/evidence you have used to draw your conclusions. This could include national or local data sets, results from consultation and engagement activities or meetings etc. (see guidance document for internal support offer).

Supporting data/evidence	Source
The Housing Benefit data base.	Housing Benefit database

Having considered the impact of the proposal on the general duties of the Equality Act and the impact on groups with protected characteristics, please provide a summary of the overall impact your proposal (with reference to supporting evidence):

The Policy offers support to veterans of the armed forces and war widows/widowers in the borough who may have additional costs above other vulnerable groups within the borough.

The disregard is awarded automatically if a person is in receipt of a war pension or war widow's pension.

Do you have any gaps in data or evidence to assess or understand

impact?

Yes/No (please delete as appropriate and if 'yes' provide details below))

Gaps in data/evidence	Planned action to address evidence gaps
The Council holds a repository of community groups supporting the voluntary and community sector.	This can be reviewed alongside the HB data base to see if there are any groups who could be claiming the relief.

Do you have any plans to reduce the impact on the groups identified?

Proposed Action/Plan	Purpose	Impact Groups	Timescale
Review HB claims to ensure the disregard has been awarded	To identify (and target) any gaps in take up	Not known	To be carried out as per the Housing Benefit review process.

To be completed by Equalities Officer
(with Lead Officer)

Part 3: Recommendations and Sign Off

Recommendations should be based on evidence available at the time and aim to mitigate negative impacts or enhance positive impacts on any or all of the protected characteristics.

Recommendation	Lead Officer	Timescale